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RESEARCH ARTICLE

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Silent Walk as a street mobilization: Campaigning following the Grenfell Tower fire

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Abstract

This paper uses ethnography and interviews with 15 participants who were actively involved in the campaign following the 2017 Grenfell Tower fire to address the question of how campaigners use street mobilization to seek justice in the aftermath of a disaster. Analysis of observations and themes suggests that campaigners used street mobilization to do two things. First, they used it to build solidarity with supporters through accessibility, the use of shared social spaces and collectively showing respect for losses. Second, they used it to protest in a way that challenged negative stereotypes and projected their power to the authorities, who could not ignore such a large and dignified mobilization. Whereas previous social psychology research on disaster communities focuses on the determinants of the immediate responses of people who experienced a disaster, we show the strategic aspects of such disaster communities. Please refer to the Supplementary Material section to find this article's Community and Social Impact Statement.

KEYWORDS

campaigning, disaster communities, disasters, Grenfell Tower fire, injustice, justice, silent walk, social identity, street mobilization

1 | INTRODUCTION

Post-disaster campaigns might arise to seek justice in the aftermath of a disaster because working-class and ethnic minority are often affected disproportionately (Quarantelli, 1999). Problems experienced by different sections of

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society in an aftermath evidence that disasters are political and human made rather than simply natural events (Solnit, 2009). A sense of common fate among survivors can give rise to emergent shared identity, and that shared identity might enable them to coordinate their actions (Drury, Cocking, & Reicher, 2009b). In this paper, we examine the identity-based coordinated actions of a post-disaster justice campaign. We used ethnographic observations and interviews with campaigners in the aftermath of the Grenfell Tower fire, the worst fire in the United Kingdom since World War II, to understand how campaigners use street mobilization to gain support and seek justice in a post-disaster justice campaign.

One of the most prominent campaign features through which those affected by the Grenfell Tower fire sought justice was a street mobilization, a monthly Silent Walk, which both commemorated the dead and sent a message to the authorities (Renwick, 2019). Based on both the social psychology and disasters literature, we examined how post-disaster campaign activities such as this can operate as a mechanism to collectively overcome injustice and enable campaigners to articulate their identity politically.

1.1 | Disaster communities

Research on group responses to disasters shows that people who are affected by a disaster often come together and act as one in the aftermath (e.g., Drury, Cocking, & Reicher, 2009a; Kaniasty, 2019). Such 'disaster communities' have been understood in terms of emergent shared social identities (Drury et al., 2019), which can sometimes extend to wider communities who are not directly affected by the disaster. In social psychological terms, the individual reactions of survivors and their supporters can become 'shared reactions' (Ntontis, Drury, Amlôt, Rubin, & Williams, 2018).

As well as focusing on immediate needs, sometimes disaster communities campaign to demand investigation, accountability and justice in the aftermath (Fominaya, 2011; Sarfati, 2019; Tekin & Drury, 2020). Campaigning is therefore one of the possible shared reactions of survivors and their supporters. Examples from the disasters literature suggest that to have any success, these post-disaster justice campaigns need to orient to both 'internal' audiences (members, supporters) and 'external' audiences (the authorities they are challenging or pressuring) (Tekin & Drury, 2020).

Active and successful campaigns may help people affected to meet these needs for justice (Aldrich, 2013). Ninety-six people lost their lives and hundreds were injured and traumatized in the Hillsborough football disaster on 15 April 1989. Although that disaster occurred because police directed people into already overcrowded pens (Cronin, 2017), the deaths were declared accidental at the end of the inquests held in 1991. Therefore, the Hillsborough Justice Campaign arose to demand justice and its campaigning eventually led to a new inquest, which ruled that the supporters had been unlawfully killed because of the negligence of the police and ambulance services (Scraton, Jemphrey, & Coleman, 1995).

1.2 | Post-disaster justice campaigns

Besides supporting survivors and bereaved families for immediate needs in the aftermath of a disaster (Kaniasty, 2019), community members and supporters can also support campaign activities to demand investigation, accountability and justice (Luft, 2009). Sometimes those campaign activities decline over time, but sometimes they might continue in different forms. Commemoration activities in the aftermath of disasters are some of the features of those campaigns at which communities represent their respect and mourning, empowerment and responses against injustice (Eyre, 2007).

The forms of such activities for justice in post-disaster campaigns include legal actions (Sarfati, 2019), petitions (Aldrich, 2013), demonstrations (Luft, 2009) and boycotts (Williams & Treadaway, 2009). Tekin and Drury (2020) found that reaching out to allies and building a shared identity with supporters from wider communities were two

main ways of achieving campaign goals. Campaigners created a petition calling on the government to build public trust in a public inquiry in the aftermath of the Grenfell Tower fire. They obtained over 150,000 signatures in 2 weeks; this pressured the authorities to include community members in the inquiry process.

Street mobilizations can be used as post-disaster justice campaign activities to bring different groups together within a campaign and canvass intergroup solidarity against injustice (Fominaya, 2011). In the aftermath of the Fukushima nuclear disaster, many different youth groups organized demonstrations on the streets to express their anger against the authorities' lack of transparency during the decision-making process regarding energy-related policies (Aldrich, 2013). Having common activities and mutual spaces (i.e., streets) was an opportunity for campaigners to sustain their political action in the long term (Sarfati, 2019).

Previous studies have examined the psychological conditions for the emergence of disaster communities (Drury et al., 2009a) and have described some of the campaigning activities of such groups (Tekin & Drury, 2020). In addition, the disaster literature has shown that campaigners can achieve justice using street mobilizations in an aftermath (Aldrich, 2013). But what has not been addressed is the question of *how* street mobilizations are used strategically by participants in such groups in the aftermath of a disaster. A systematic analysis of the experiences of campaigners in such groups can help us to understand *how* this achievement is possible psychologically, which will be useful for other post-disaster campaign movements.

In line with others who have examined mobilization strategies (Reicher and Hopkins (1996); Hopkins & Reicher, 1997), we approached groups and social categories as strategic accomplishments rather than just cognitive reflections of social relations. Based on previous work, we therefore suggest that social identity will play an important role in the strategic use of a street mobilization; participants' actions not only reflected their shared sense of injustice but also sought to create or maintain connections with others within the wider group (building the identity), and to communicate about the group to those from whom they were demanding justice.

1.3 | The current study

This paper addresses the question of how street mobilization was used and sustained by participants as a campaigning strategy following the Grenfell Tower fire, by focusing on the monthly Silent Walk. Grenfell Tower was a 24-storey housing block managed by the Kensington and Chelsea Tenant Management Organization (KCTMO) on behalf of the local authority. It contained 120 flats in a mix of social housing and private homes. A fire began on the fourth floor on 14 June 2017 got out of control within 30 min. It spread to the other flats rapidly because flammable cladding had been used during refurbishment projects carried out by KCTMO in the year before the fire (Bulley, 2019). Seventy-two people lost their lives, over 200 people in the area lost their accommodation and thousands were traumatized (Booth & Wahlquist, 2017).

The underlying reasons for the fire have their roots in the negligence of the authorities rather than a simple fire in an electrical appliance. Even though residents had repeatedly voiced their concerns about fire safety in Grenfell Tower for the 4 years preceding the fire, necessary actions were not taken by the council or KCTMO to make the building safe (Charles, 2019). Campaigners, volunteers and people affected by the fire therefore immediately came together to meet survivors' material needs (e.g., accommodation). They also campaigned against the local council: first, because of the negligence of the authorities before the fire; second, because of the long delays in sorting out appropriate replacement accommodation. A local person who lived opposite the building organized the first Silent Walk with the permission of the campaign group of survivors and bereaved families, Grenfell United. Community members and people from wider communities came together on the 14th of every month to walk silently. They walked in the neighbourhood of Grenfell Tower for approximately 90 min, some wearing green t-shirts, scarves or badges shaped like green hearts, as the colour green had become the symbol of Grenfell. Announcements and reminders about the Silent Walks were made through the social media accounts of Grenfell United. Even though

Grenfell United was the prior campaign group, which organizers of the Silent Walk prioritized while organizing the event, nobody or any group took exclusive ownership of the walks.

We were interested in understanding this powerful street mobilization from the campaigners' perspective. We sought to examine the concrete appearance and symbolism of the event. In addition, we wanted to learn their strategy in supporting and promoting it, and how they saw and experienced the event. So, in order to answer our question about how participants use street mobilizations in a post-disaster campaign, we carried out ethnographic observations and interviews with participants.

2 | METHOD

2.1 | Ethnographic framework

Using ethnography as a framework enabled us to experience and observe the campaigning activities that began after the Grenfell Tower fire. For 2 years, we attended most of the Silent Walks. Observations from 20 of them were used in this analysis. In addition to the walks, we participated in activities such as meetings of campaign groups, council meetings, banner-making sessions and activities for children. Participants got to know us and some of them agreed to participate in our research with interviews. We used the materials that we gathered during our ethnography, to provide contextual evidence when we explain and analyse our themes.

2.2 | Field notes

The first author took notes after each Silent Walk, during campaign meetings and after campaign activities. The notes included the slogans that were on the banners, the estimated numbers of participants, brief descriptions of the meeting locations, arguments about the activities of different campaign groups and discussions among different members. The amount of notes made for each activity ranged between 50 and 200 words, with approximately 115 words being the modal amount for each day.

2.3 | Archive materials

We took over 500 photographs during the Silent Walks. The photographs included some of the banners that had slogans related to Grenfell Tower, solidarity with community members and campaigners' demands from the authorities. We collected 98 articles from different newspapers and magazines, 43 flyer-event announcements and blog posts, 19 reports and announcements from government-related websites, three radio broadcasts and four television documentaries. Finally, we collected social media posts from Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube to follow the campaign strategies. These resources helped us to become familiar with the discussions and news about community and campaign events and activities.

2.4 | Interviews

We carried out semi-structured interviews with 15 participants (5 female and 10 male, with ages ranging from 25 to 65 years). After we felt that campaigners were familiar with our participation in their events, we asked if they would agree to participate in our research. We specifically aimed to recruit activists who attended campaign activities from the beginning, or who were active on social media if their physical attendance was difficult. We approached

40 campaigners. Twenty-five of them declined to participate because some of them found the topic traumatic to talk about while others stated that they did not feel safe about their voices being recorded. Four of our interviewees had lost loved ones during the fire. Nine were residents who lived around the Grenfell Tower area and six had attended campaign activities from different districts in London and beyond. We began our interviews in February 2019 and ended in May 2019. We continued to interview people until the saturation point was reached and we stopped receiving new answers to our questions.

Interviews lasted between 30 and 74 min with a mean of 46.5 min. The interviews usually took place in their campaigning environment, which was around the Grenfell Tower area in Notting Dale, west London. We carried out two of them online because one of the interviewees had mobility difficulties and the other was living in Manchester. All of the interviews were audio recorded (with the participants' consent) and fully transcribed.

The interview schedule began with open-ended questions about their experiences of being involved in the campaign. The other sections of the interview comprised questions on topics related to their identities, the Silent Walk, other supporters and the fire. We asked, '*How do you think the Silent Walk was a useful action?*' to understand their views of the Silent Walks. The question '*What are your reasons as someone involved in campaigning activities?*' was to understand the aims of the Silent Walks and other campaign activities. Finally, to learn about campaigners' experiences and perspectives of the Silent Walks, we asked '*Can you tell me your experiences about Silent Walks?*'¹

2.5 | Thematic analysis procedure

We wanted to learn what features of the Silent Walks allowed campaigners to organize to achieve their justice aims and the extent to which shared identity played a role in this. We were interested in learning about the campaigners' perspective on how they experienced the event and their strategy in supporting it. Therefore, thematic analysis was employed on the transcriptions of our interviews.

The themes, which we found, described the experiences of our participants in relation to different features of the monthly Silent Walk. We mainly used the theoretical (deductive) type of thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) since our research questions aimed to understand the social and psychological processes in the Silent Walks based on the social identity approach. However, some of the themes were derived from the responses that participants provided during the interviews rather than based on a specific social psychology theory. A first superordinate theme, 'solidarity', included themes of 'accessibility' (sub-theme 'importance of spaces') and 'respect for the community's loss', each of which concerned ways that people came together (i.e., internal relations). The second superordinate theme, 'political actions', included the themes 'challenging stereotypes' and 'projecting power to the authorities', both of which concerned relations with authorities.

3 | ANALYSIS

We begin our analysis with a description based on our ethnography during the Silent Walks. In addition, before presenting each theme, we include details about the context (based on our ethnography), related to those themes.

The Silent Walks were the main collective events that involved many different supporters of survivors gathering in the same place. There were more than 200 campaign groups related to the fire (Still_I_Rise_GT, 2018). The issues that they focused on were accommodation, holding the authorities and cladding companies accountable and changing social housing safety regulations. Even though their campaign aims differed slightly among the groups, the Silent Walks appeared to create a 'we-ness' among them.

3.1 | Solidarity—Internal relations

Solidarity was an observable feature of the Silent Walks, in that many people wore green articles of clothing, as well as green scarves that were given out by the campaign groups to symbolize Grenfell. Some of the banners that campaigners carried were shaped like green hearts; the heart symbolized 'love' and 'support for the community' (Renwick, 2019). In addition, banners displayed words related to support that campaigners sought to give. Some of the words were related to we-ness among the supporters such as 'together', 'unity', 'solidarity', 'community', 'ComeUnity', 'remembrance' and 'United for Grenfell'. In the Silent Walks, different groups and individuals moved as one and maintained a collective silence.

In the interviews, *solidarity* was suggested by the words and phrases used by most of our interviewees. When we asked about their experiences on the Silent Walks, they frequently used the term 'we', and they often used phrases and words such as 'unity' or 'united', 'supporting each other' and 'being one group' when describing the Silent Walks, suggesting that there was a shared identity among supporters. In Extract 1, the interviewee states that the Silent Walk was a 'reflective' event showing that community members were sad because they had lost people during the fire; however, the walks were still 'dignified' and 'powerful' because they gave people a space to come together as one and manifest solidarity:

Extract 1: I find it [the Silent Walk] deeply affecting, actually. There's a beautiful calm and a sleepless tranquillity to it. It really is very powerful, and it's very dignified. It is an expression of sadness and solidarity, and it's very reflective. And there's also that coming together of people. You get to know the people
[Harry². Non-local male campaigner]

Solidarity was a superordinate theme evident in most of our interviewees' accounts. Themes associated with solidarity were *accessibility* (who was involved in the campaign), and *respect for community's loss* (why they got involved).

3.2 | Accessibility

We attended meetings of different campaign groups and various campaign activities. Some of them involved only people who had been invited, although we observed that the Silent Walks were open and accessible to everybody who wanted to support the Grenfell community. Although agendas differed among campaign groups (see Bulley, 2019 for more examples of campaign agendas such as social housing, ideological concerns and union-related agendas), they could gather under a shared identity defined in terms of injustice and act as one during the Silent Walks to seek justice.

Seven of our interviewees stated that the Silent Walks were *accessible* for both local and non-local supporters, and were a practical way for them to come together. One of our participants stated (Extract 2) that many people from the United Kingdom and all over the world were affected by the Grenfell Tower fire and they could come together in this event. When he said 'this is Grenfell Britain' he was arguing that the fire needed to be considered in a broader context related to inequalities. Even though the fire happened in one building, it embodies the injustices experienced by the working-class in the whole of the country. Campaigners therefore need support from the wider population. This feature, the accessibility of the Silent Walks, allowed other supporters to be in the same place at the same time with local campaigners:

Extract 2: This is Grenfell Britain, not just Grenfell W10 [North Kensington]. Actually, we need to get together with other people. Well, 90% of the people who are involved in the walks are our neighbours, but, people from all over the country and international, indeed, came to support. I think that's

reflected in the Silent Walks that there's a whole range of people based in North Kensington but much wider than that.

[Peter. local male campaigner]

3.2.1 | The importance of spaces

As we observed during the ethnography, the accessibility of the Silent Walks seemed to be linked to the physical spaces on the route to which the campaigners had sense of belonging to. Particular community spaces and walkways around the area had historical significance to local people. Residents and the local council had been battling over the ownership of some of these spaces for years (Charles, 2019). A number of interviewees expressed a strong identification with North Kensington and they showed this in the spaces where they felt safe and to which they belonged.

Usually, the Silent Walk ended under the motorway, the Westway. That area was called the 'Wall of Truth' Area. It is an open, public space and community members had covered the walls with a mural in the aftermath of the fire. As we observed and many campaigners stated, it was one of the main spaces where community members felt a sense of collective ownership and where supporters could also gather. Extract 3 presents the response of one of our interviewees when we asked how the campaign would operate if campaigners did not have those spaces. She explained that campaign spaces, especially the Wall of Truth area, were vital for campaigners to organize Silent Walks. The Wall of Truth was an open, inclusive space for 'everyone', which means that all participants and supporters could be part of it:

Extract 3: I think the Silent Walk is very key to the community. It serves a lot of purposes for the community. Wall of Truth and the walk, it's something that all the groups, all the people who aren't in groups, everyone can be part of it. I think that it would be a lot harder for people to campaign or be active without things like that. The walk and the Wall of Truth is open to everyone and anyone, no matter how they're involved, no matter where they live, no matter their history. It would be very hard I think without those sorts of spaces, to keep.

[Karen. Local female campaigner]

3.3 | Respect for the community's loss

During our ethnography, we observed that silence during the walks was a sign of respect for the loss of community members. At the end of each Silent Walk, people gathered together in front of the Wall of Truth and paused for 72 s in silence facing Grenfell Tower. Campaigners then read 72 people's names, saying 'Forever in our hearts' in unison after every 12 names. Extract 4 presents the comments of one of the local members on this feature of memorializing the meaning of the Silent Walk activities. She described the attendance of the wider community members as a way of showing their respect to the Grenfell community. She expressed her opinion by comparing the Silent Walks with family gatherings. People come together every month to share the sense of community and show their respect to the Grenfell community:

Extract 4: Yeah, there's a respect there. On a base of course, like Grenfell United say thank you to the wider community after every silent walk. But they're still turning up. That's beautiful. People don't even go see their families that often. Do you know what I mean? There's a sense of family as well. With Grenfell United or just Grenfell in general. I feel like there really is people that are impacted.

[Jessica. Local female campaigner]

3.4 | Political action—External relations

We also observed that the Silent Walks had a 'political' meaning for campaigners, in that they were part of a campaign to challenge the authorities and to seek justice. The form of the street mobilization was like that of a political demonstration, including people carrying placards and speeches at a rally at the end. In addition, some of the words on banners and placards were related to the 'political' meaning of the walks, in that they represented what community members demanded from the authorities: 'justice', 'change', 'truth', 'clarity', 'truth will not be hidden', 'justice for Grenfell', '72 dead and still no arrests' and 'safe affordable housing'.

In line with our observations, 11 of our interviewees stated that the Silent Walks were protests against the inactions of the authorities. In Extract 5, when our interviewee stated that the 'community were angry' and 'it could have easily gone into riots', he was referring to the 2011 riots, which happened across London. The Silent Walk was an expression of community anger, as were the riots. However, the idea of the organizer was to use a different strategy by generating a non-violent and normative type of mobilization to help campaigners to create a sustainable event that keeps supporters together until justice is achieved:

Extract 5: This community were angry. It could have easily gone into riots, and people were coming with the intention of provocation. In fact, basically the state thought there was going to be riots. *** [name of the organizer], at certain points has talked, in a way, that he's building a kind of non-violent resistance. It's a community action that says that people aren't going away, and that we're not going to stop, and it won't stop until there's a semblance of justice. And I can't ever see those silent marches ending. I think you have a core support for it, and for me and for many people, I block out the 14th every single month. Well, I'll be here, rain, snow or shine. And I'm not alone in that. There's hundreds of us. There's thousands of us.
[Lucas. Non-local male campaigner]

3.5 | Challenging negative stereotypes

Working-class and minority populations who seek justice against the way that they are treated by the authorities are sometimes delegitimized by being denigrated as disorderly, disorganized or aggressive (Cocking & Drury, 2014). We observed during the Silent Walk events that the participants were a diverse group of people who had different ethnic and religious backgrounds (i.e., Black, Muslim, White). During the Silent Walks, they showed their political responses against the authorities by placards and banners; but the way that people acted challenged the stereotypes put out by the authorities.

The organizer of the Silent Walk suggested a 'respectable' form of collective action to influence those in power. In line with our observations, six of our interviewees stated that they expected the city council to characterize them as loud and noisy if they carried out confrontational types of protest. However, the Silent Walk was a way of 'challenging the stereotypes of the authorities'. As one of the local members of the community stated in Extract 6, although the Silent Walk was a way of demonstrating respect for the community's loss, it also had a political meaning. She commented on how Black and ethnic minority populations are stereotyped by the authorities and that the Silent Walk was a way of challenging those stereotypes: if the gathering is legitimate and peaceful, its cause cannot be challenged on other grounds, something which she said it had been succeeding in doing:

Extract 6: The Silent Walk is a way of us showing respect for and remembrance for the 72 people who died. It also is a way, initially, of us shutting down the idea that actually you have people from black and minority ethnic communities that get stereotyped as we're noisy, loud, and angry. We're thugs, yeah. So, we said okay we'll challenge that. Actually, we'll go quietly down the street, but

there'd be a lot of us. What are you going to do? You can't challenge us. We're not making noise. We're not being rude. We're just walking. So that's been very successful. So, it's done two things. It's given a space for the bereaved families to remember and to grieve once a month and for them to know that actually the community still holds them in our heart.

[Amelia. Local female campaigner]

3.6 | Projecting political power

At the end of all of the Silent Walks, there were public speeches by campaigners about what needed to be done to demand accountability from the cladding companies responsible for the fire. After the speeches, the crowd chanted 'Justice' several times.

We named this theme 'projecting political power' because, according to the descriptions given by eight of our interviewees, through gathering many people together, the Silent Walk made them stronger and more visible to those in authority. In Extract 7, one of the interviewees focuses on the idea of expressing campaigners' power in relation to the authorities. When she said 'It's our chance for us to come together and show authorities that we are standing together', she meant that the Walk is a highly visible expression of unity and public support for their cause, which the authorities therefore cannot ignore. The interviewee also used the words 'we' and 'us' to express that she identified herself with the community and the campaigners; on the other hand, she used 'they' or 'them' when she referred to the authorities, who were seen as 'other':

Extract 7: They're [Silent Walks] really powerful, and really meaningful. About the community coming together, it's our chance for us to sort of come together and show the authorities that, yeah, we are standing together. Whether the numbers are up, down, whether there's loads of us, whether there's ten of us or a hundred of us, it doesn't matter. I found them useful because I think it still puts it in their minds that, yeah, we're not resting.

[Lily. Local female campaigner]

4 | DISCUSSION

We found that campaigners used the Silent Walks to build solidarity (a superordinate theme) among supporters of survivors and bereaved families, thereby focusing on internal relations ('we', 'us'), by coming together and mobilizing at the same time against injustice. Moreover, the second superordinate theme, 'political action', describes the way that campaigners used the Silent Walks to orient to external relations as well as internal ones by pressuring authorities with their demand for justice. Shared identity was evident both physically (in the common symbols) and in the interviews. We-ness was referred to both in relation to solidarity (the 'we' of the local community and the 'we' of the wider group of supporters) and in relation to the political function of the walk ('we' in relation to the authorities). Maintaining we-ness was a key function of the Silent Walks.

4.1 | Contributions to the literature

In line with the social psychology literature (Drury et al., 2009a), what happened in the aftermath of the Grenfell Tower was an example of how disaster communities form based on their shared identity to meet their needs. Survivors and bereaved families led a campaign that helps to achieve their goals of justice and accountability. Many other local people and other supporters campaigned for these goals, including by street mobilization, which brought

different supporters together. Examples from the disasters literature suggest that in order to be successful, post-disaster justice campaigns need to orient to both internal audiences (members and supporters) and to the external audiences, whom campaigners are challenging and pressuring (Tekin & Drury, 2020). This study adds to the literature on disaster communities by focusing on the strategic angle. In line with Hopkins and Reicher's (1997) approach, we found that people do not just become groups (and therefore get mutual support) because they share a common fate (Drury et al., 2019). They also consciously *do things* (activities) collectively to constitute themselves as a group and to try to overcome injustice and challenge or pressure authorities. Identity is achieved deliberately through common action not just passively as a function of a common fate. Even though the social psychology literature on disaster communities explains how emergent shared identities appear during the response and recovery phase (Ntontis et al., 2018), research on the factors promoting the continuity of those support groups has been neglected in the literature, despite its importance both to the theory and practically, in relation to the needs of survivors. In other words, there has not previously been an analysis of how those affected by a disaster and their supporters act to keep the group alive. Even months or years later, they still need the social support that comes from being a member of a group. The Silent Walks were an activity as a commemoration, which kept campaign activities alive for over 2 years. Campaigners acted collectively, strategically and deliberately to maintain the group and activities to achieve their demands for justice.

Another contribution of this study is related to the functions of spaces. Consistent with the recent social psychology literature (Bettencourt, Castro, & Dixon, 2021), we found that the history of the spaces and knowledge about the spaces play a vital role in the identity processes of residents. However, instead of considering spaces as contested between groups and intergroup conflict (Dixon et al., 2020), our study adds to the literature by suggesting that spaces are a basis for collective action. In other words, we have suggested that spaces have functions for campaigners to organize their actions collectively.

Finally, some previous studies have suggested that unaffected residents can share identities with those affected by a disaster, referencing a *we-ness* when they were acting collectively with affected people (Ntontis et al., 2018). However, most of the existing social psychology research on emergencies has focused on the immediate response phase when people share with each other because of their material needs. In contrast, our findings have shown the actions, the Silent Walks of campaigners when they were seeking justice against repeated inaction by the authorities over months and years after a disaster. Memorialization as a way of not only remembering but physically mobilizing has been shown to be a crucial strategy.

4.2 | Limitations

Interviewing members of all the different Grenfell campaign groups was not possible since there were over 200 different campaigns (Still_I_Rise_GT, 2018). Because members of different campaign groups might have different agendas for attending the campaign activities, especially the Silent Walks, we might have found more themes if we were able to reach all of those groups of people. Also, it is important not to overstate the homogeneity of the responses. Most of our interviewees and the campaigners with whom we interacted during the ethnographic phase of the study agreed that the Silent Walks were useful, powerful and important events for the community members; however, some participants also stated that silence can easily be ignored by the authorities. For this reason, they also mentioned the importance of 'vocal' events (i.e., demonstrations or riots) in addition to Silent Walks.

The generalization and representativeness of our findings is another limitation that we need to acknowledge because the area of Grenfell Tower and the context of the campaigning have a unique history based on activism against injustice and inequality (Charles, 2019). In other contexts where community members do not have a local heritage of actions and resistance to draw upon, or a lack of the physical spaces that we found to be important, campaign activities might not be as sustainable as the Grenfell Silent Walks. Even so, the evidence is still consistent with

the argument that under particular conditions, street mobilization can be used to build internal solidarity and external pressure, which can apply to other post-disaster justice campaigns.

4.3 | Wider implications

Community responses against unequal treatment by the authorities have also been seen in the context of another type of emergency: epidemics. In the case of the Ebola virus, because the authorities treated socio-economically advantaged groups better than disadvantaged groups, and because government decisions were not transparent during the spread, people rioted in different cities (Cohn & Kutalek, 2016). We saw a similar situation in 2020 with the COVID-19 pandemic. Although socio-economically advantaged groups were able to find and afford protective materials more easily and could work from home, working-class populations often had to work in unsafe conditions (Templeton et al., 2020). In some countries, people protested against the unequal policies of their governments (Redfish [redfishstream], 2020), and in other countries, people who lost their loved ones took legal action to seek justice from people in leadership positions who had not taken necessary actions equally for everybody (Giuffrida, 2020).

5 | CONCLUSIONS

The Silent Walks and the justice-seeking actions for Grenfell Tower fire survivors and families continued after we stopped collecting data. We also continued to attend the walks and to support campaigners' actions on social media. When the COVID-19 outbreak started, the inquiry into the Grenfell Tower fire was suspended, but campaigners maintained the pressure on the authorities and their actions have been successful in keeping the Grenfell Tower on the agenda of the authorities (GrenfellUnited, 2020).

Our study contributes to the literature by being the first social psychology research study, which links the existing social psychology literature and disaster literature on the same topic. In addition, it is the first social psychology study to use a combination of ethnography and interviews together to understand how campaigners use street mobilization as a feature of post-disaster campaign activities.

We have demonstrated that campaign activities have different meanings, which also encourage people to be united and to keep their activities alive. Organizing Silent Walks for 2 years had two types of meaning that our participants (campaigners) specified. One of the meanings was solidarity, which is related to internal relations (community members and supporters); whereas the other meaning was political, which was related to external audiences (the authorities whom the campaigners were challenging). In each case, we have shown the value of looking at post-disaster groups from a strategic perspective—that is, understanding relations both within the group and between the group and other groups as something conscious and deliberately achieved rather than simply being a passive function of given contextual features such as a common fate.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors have no conflicts of interest to declare.

ENDNOTES

¹ The full schedule is in the Supplementary Materials.

² All the names have been changed to preserve interviewees' anonymity.

DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

Research data are not shared.

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SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Additional supporting information may be found online in the Supporting Information section at the end of this article.

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